1999


# Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

Vol. X.—No. 26. NEW YORK, N. Y., MAY 4, 1895. Whole No. 312.


*"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!*
*Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;*
*And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."*
JOHN HAY.

## On Picket Duty.

"The Science of Society," by Stephen Pearl Andrews, which has been out of print for the last year, has just been reissued, — this time in paper as well as cloth. See advertisement in another column, accompanied by premium offer to purchasers.

Judging from the character of my recent mail, I conclude that certain persons are beginning to find out that the "Twentieth Century" is pursuing a reactionary policy, and accordingly to entertain contempt for it. For myself, I am more disposed to reserve my contempt for these persons themselves, who for two years have been coöperating in this reactionary policy without knowing what they were doing.

Mr. Gordak's little poem, "The Ballot," printed on the sixth page, presents so forcibly, compactly, and simply the argument against reform by suffrage that I intend to issue it on a little slip, with an advertisement of Liberty printed on the back, in the hope that friends will purchase it in quantities for gratuitous circulation. It will be ready in a week or two, and will be supplied, post-paid, at ten cents per hundred copies.

Since the publication of the last issue of Liberty it has come to my knowledge that the letter concerning Lord Rosebery upon which I therein commented was published in the English newspapers nearly in full, and that the French translation of the sentence which I quoted did not accurately represent the original, in which the Marquis of Queensberry spoke of Oscar Wilde as "a damned cur and coward of the Rosebery type." This wording, coupled with the context (which the French journals did not print), leaves it at least a matter of doubt whether Queensberry intended to accuse Rosebery of practices similar to those attributed to Oscar Wilde, and hence I deeply regret having commented on the subject in the way that I did.

John Z. White, who is regarded as one of the ablest and most eloquent champions of the Single Tax, has declared that the only issue before us is the land question, and that there are no other issues. It is difficult to say which is the more reactionary position, this of White, which finds nothing wrong in the present system outside of the land laws, or that of George and most Single Taxers, who want fiat money, government railroads, and a number of other things, in addition to the Single Tax and incompatible with true individualism. At the same time White is more *consistent* than the Single Taxers who profess to favor other reforms, more consistent than those even who profess to be libertarians in everything except land tenure.

A hit, a palpable hit is made by the Boston "Transcript" when it observes, *à propos* of the criticisms passed upon unconventional plays by those preachers of righteousness and worshippers of commonplace, the dramatic critics, that "it ill becomes any critic who praises so many frivolous dramatic inanities of the day to condemn so serious a study of contemporary social conditions as Mr. Pinero's 'The Second Mrs. Tanqueray.'" These men, continues the "Transcript," who frown on realistic and purposeful plays, "will unhesitatingly praise any plays which make fun of and deride the most serious emotions and the most holy passions in life." It would be interesting to determine whether the hypocrisy of these critics is conscious or unconscious, and no man is better qualified for this interesting task than G. B. S., who is making the "Saturday Review" worth reading by his admirable weekly studies in contemporary dramatic art.

In a notice of Mr. Donisthorpe's "Law in a Free State," the English "Review of Reviews" is perspicacious enough to see that Mr. Donisthorpe inculcates "scientific Anarchy." Possibly the reviewer is aided by the preface of the book, in which the author deliciously offers an apology to philosophical Anarchists for putting forth a work that contains matter more or less familiar to them and profitable only to the groping Individualists. There was no real occasion for the apology. It is a great service to all of us to open the eyes of such men as the editor of the "Review of Reviews" to the existence and importance of scientific Anarchism. In time even Mr. Spencer may be induced to honor us by his attention. Is it not somewhat strange, not to say unfair, that he has so far betrayed no consciousness of the existence of philosophical, individualist Anarchism? Mr. Spencer does not belong to those philosophers for whom the movements and struggles of the real world possess no interest. He is, on the contrary, an alert, keen, interested observer, and permits nothing of significance to escape him. This being the case, is it fair on his part to maintain perfect silence as to the theoretical and practical claims of our movement? Is it honest to ignore it?

Robert Lindblom, a well-known member of the Chicago board of trade, who was one of Bellamy's converts a few years ago, at a recent meeting of the Chicago Single-Tax Club avowed himself a philosophical Anarchist. He declared that philosophical Anarchy is the highest type of society, and that education must precede the establishment of individualism. Discussing the land question, he defined his position as follows: "I do not look on the Single Tax as a solution, but I would be foolish not to coöperate with you because I cannot all at once have my own way. To absolutely prohibit anybody from putting a legal fence about land not actually in use is my solution of the land question, but that is impossible now, and so I favor the Single Tax as an educator. . . . . The Single Tax leads up to the Anarchistic position, which I think is true, — that a man has the right to use land that somebody else is not using." This, it will be seen, is a more advanced position than that of our friend Byington, who believes in the Single Tax as a permanent institution. Mr. Lindblom, if I understand him, is ready to work for the Single Tax simply because he thinks it an easier and simpler thing to obtain, but, as soon as he has succeeded in obtaining it, he will start an agitation for occupancy-and-use tenure.

The rulers of old-world monarchies ought to emigrate to the United States. Their methods of governing are obsolete and played out. Heresies of all kinds thrive and flourish in their dominions, and armies and navies can do nothing to check them. In the United States alone do piety and virtue really triumph over vice and infidelity. We do not bother ourselves about forms and externals, but we secure the substance all the same. Fine phrases have no effect on our legislators, and we have no difficulty in passing laws calculated to promote morality and religion. How easy it was for us to suppress lotteries and gambling of all kinds, — evils which are as yet in full play in less pious countries. We know how to get things done when we are really bent on having them done. Our rulers rule. Our citizens obey. No more patriotic country exists on the face of the earth; no more law-and-order-loving people has ever been known. Our masters require no trappings, no stage-thunder, no divine-right nonsense. We appeal to two things exclusively, — to piety and the pocket. What the pocket is incapable of accomplishing we leave to piety; and where piety fails the pocket is sure to respond. The credit of discovering this marvellous combination belongs to us. In Hawaii piety and pocket crushed an idolatrous monarchy and established a Christian republic; in this country we keep the people pure, economical (they haven't much to spend), and patriotic. There is no chance here for theorizers and cranks. They have absolutely no influence in our halls of legislation. There only God and the Dollar are recognized.

# Liberty.

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*"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the excise man, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel."* — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

## Free Speech and Its Abuse.

What does Mrs. Ellen Battelle Dietrick mean when she denounces in the "Twentieth Century" as an "abuse of free speech" the pouring forth, by the Prohibitionist "Voice" and the bigot-Protestant "Woman's Voice," of "an unceasing, relentless, bitterly vituperative volume of hatred" upon the liquor dealers and the Roman Catholics? Such attacks, such clamor for legal suppression, such intemperate and wild indictments as those she refers to may be, and unquestionably are, offences against common sense, taste, and propriety, but they are emphatically *not* "abuses" of the freedom of speech. They are instances of the legitimate exercise of freedom of speech. We have a right to blame and condemn anything we deem pernicious, and no one may dictate to us the *language* to be used in our expressions of disapprobation or alarm. Even in a free society it will be legitimate for men, not only to organize a wordy crusade against anything objectionable to them, but to demand its proscription and punishment by the voluntary association charged with the administration of justice. Whether the sale of liquor is right or wrong is merely a question of logic. If people who profess to follow the principle of equal freedom assert that liquor-selling is invasive and deserving of stern suppression, we have no right to restrain their fullest freedom of utterance. It is no more an abuse of free speech to frantically demand the extermination of liquor-selling than it is to clamor for the punishment of thieves. It is for the voluntary association, for the jury, to decide whether given demands or charges are rational or not. There can be hardly any doubt that under a system based on equal freedom thievery will be punished and liquor-selling declared wholly innocent. But prohibition editors will have the fullest liberty of agitating for the exclusion of this trade and trying to persuade or scare us into the belief that it is an act of aggression to sell liquor.

The whole question of the "abuse" of free speech requires more attention and closer analysis than has yet been accorded it. I have had grave doubts for some time whether such a thing as an *abuse* of free speech is at all possible. I am inclined to take the position that all speech ought to be free, and that there can be no invasive quality in mere speech. We have in our existing jurisprudence certain classes of offences in which liability is not contingent on real injury. The law *implies* injury, and the person guilty of the technical wrong is liable to penalties at all events. Generally the damages will in such cases be purely nominal, but the principle is not affected thereby. There are wrongs, says the law, which import injury. The principle is doubtless sound. Injury is no test of invasion. There may be injury without invasion, and invasion without any injury except injury to the feelings (of which equal freedom takes no cognizance). But I am convinced that under equal freedom technical offences will not be punished. As a matter of expediency purely, juries will in all probability refuse to inflict penalties for acts which, while theoretically invasive, are practically harmless and involve no injury to, or annoying trespass upon, person or property. The verdict will probably be: "Guilty of an invasive act, but no penalty beyond censure."

Now take the case of libel and slander. Here we are not dealing with technical invasions that are not injurious, but with actions that may involve most serious injuries, and the invasive quality of which is yet in doubt. What I ask is whether it is logical to hold that it is an invasion for one man to call another publicly a liar, thief, or defaulter. Most individualists, I think, entertain the view that the answer depends on the truth or falsity of the charge. A man, it is argued, has a right to his reputation, and I have no right to injure him and affect his standing in the community by circulating certain lies about him. Is this cogent reasoning? To me it seems a fallacy. It is not my speech that injures; it is the acts of those who choose to accept without question my charges against a man whom they believe to be honest. Am I to be held responsible for their rashness and credulity? Why should I have the making and unmaking of a man's reputation in my power? Careful men will investigate charges and refrain from acting on the strength of mere allegations. My charges are not injurious until and unless somebody commits a certain act, which in itself, remember, is not invasive; yet I am held liable for injury. To say nothing of cases in which no injury whatever can be traced to my charge, and where the punishment is for a technical offence, a wrong without an actual injury, it seems to me that, even in those cases where it clearly appears that a man's reputation has suffered in consequence of my charges, we may question the soundness of the view which saddles the responsibility upon me, the man who only talked, instead of upon the man who chose to believe me and acted. To be sure, the man who acted only withheld credit from the slandered individual or committed another act equally non-invasive, and hence there is no ground for any proceedings against him. But is my talk, which was only one of the causes of the other's act, to be considered an invasion, notwithstanding the fact that the act to which it led was *not* an invasion? There is a flaw in the reasoning of the individualist upholders of libel laws. It is not logical to call that an invasion which only inflicts injury when something else, not of an invasive character, is added to it by another person. It is doubtless wrong to slander a man and indirectly cause him injury, but the wrong is not of a nature to call for forcible interference and the infliction of other than sentimental penalties. A liar and slanderer would probably be shunned by decent people, and that fact would prove a sufficiently powerful deterrent. If not, "extreme" as this "deduction" may be, I fear I shall have to come out in favor of the abolition of all libel and slander laws. V. Y.

## The Inadequacy of Co-operation.

The ordinary State Socialist seems to be incapable of discriminating between voluntary association and compulsory coöperation. Anything that is in the line of organization, whether voluntary or compulsory, is hailed by him as a move in his direction. In reality such movements are sometimes in a direction diametrically opposed to State Socialism. More often they are mere futile chases after the will-o'-the-wisp known as "something practical."

The Colony has long been a favorite means of salvation. Though still believed in by many, it seems to be giving way to the Co-operative Company. These companies are very liable to fail. But, even if they are successful, their effect upon social conditions is very trifling, and so they cannot hope to command the support of intelligent reformers.

The object of these concerns is to abolish the profit of at least one middleman, and so reduce the price of goods to the consumer. In order to do this successfully, it is necessary to conduct the company on strict business principles. This involves buying goods and labor at the best possible figure. It is upon this principle that the Rochdale companies have been conducted, — at least so Carroll D. Wright tells us in his report on Industrial Depressions, — and it is more than probable that it is to this strict adherence to business principles that they owe their success. Consequently it is futile to expect such enterprises to increase the wages of the laboring classes, except as they do so indirectly by enabling them to purchase what they need at a lower figure.

The fact that a coöperative company is selling goods below the market price at once affects that market price. Other dealers immediately cut their prices so as to retain as much of the trade as possible. This in turn necessitates a material reduction in expenses, which is effected by a cut in wages. Prices having been reduced on many staple articles, living is now much cheaper than before. So men can live on, and will accept, lower wages than formerly. As the coöperative company is forced by competition to buy at the most advantageous terms, it will be unable to do anything to maintain the old rate of wages. While these concerns may reduce the cost of goods to the consumer, they limit the purchasing power of the producer. The saving in profit really involves a corresponding reduction in wages, leaving the position of the wage-earner much as it was before. If any saving is effected, the landlord and money-lender inevitably reap the benefit. For the cheapening of living in any place is liable to attract people to that place — usually people with small but permanent incomes — and so

increases the rent in that locality.

Cooperation may be a good thing when viewed from the standpoint of domestic economy, but it is, under existing conditions, a failure from the social economists' point of view. On a small scale, it may benefit a few individuals. But, as it becomes more general, it at once begets evils which counteract the good it does.

The advocacy of such schemes by State Socialists demonstrates what poor Socialists they are. If they understood the Marxian theory of surplus value, upon which all Socialistic philosophy — whether State or Anarchistic — is necessarily based, they would know that, as long as rent and interest remain, any improvement in the means of production or distribution inevitably redounds to the benefit of the usurer.

One good, however, is liable to result from these schemes. While State Socialists are engaged in this wild-goose chase, they are at any rate out of mischief. It is far better that they should waste their energies searching for "something practical" than that they should concentrate their undivided attention on increasing the tyrannical power of the State. While they are engaged in this interesting occupation, wise men will direct their energies to the abolition of rent and interest in order that everything may become practicable.

F. D. T.

## The Independence of the New Woman.

The New York "Herald" of March 26, reporting a debate in the Political Study Club the preceding afternoon, quotes Mrs. Blake (was it Lillie Devereux?) as saying: "Well, I believe in shopping; it is man's business to earn money, and a woman's to spend it." What, then, becomes of the economic independence of women? Why should man earn money for woman to spend? We well know the answer of the world, — although that answer is more often implied than expressed, for politeness's sake; but it is strange that one demanding equal rights for woman should recognize the legitimacy of a social arrangement that forces women, as women, to receive money from men on different terms from those on which they would receive it from each other, or on which men would pay it to each other or receive it from women. Why demand the ballot for woman, why rejoice that she is securing entry into trades and professions where she can be self-sustaining, if it is "a man's business to earn money and a woman's to spend it"?

E. C. Walker.

## Aid to Perplexed Reformers.

To many well-meaning editors and earnest labor reformers the recent Illinois decision in regard to the eight-hour law for women appears to be a hard nut to crack. They are forced to admit the force of some of the court's reasoning, but at the same time the conclusion is so revolting to them that they refuse to accept it, notwithstanding their inability to point out the flaw which they are sure must lurk somewhere in the argument. Thus the Springfield "Republican," a fair and liberal paper which holds no brief for the existing system, but which is not committed to any definite scheme of reform, condemns the decision as illogical and whimsical. To its mind, the court seems to have completely lost its bearings; for, as it justly points out, the logic of the decision would undermine most of the existing factory and labor legislation. If, it argues, an eight-hour factory law for women is unconstitutional because it interferes with the freedom of contract, the ten-hour laws, the anti-truck laws, and the weekly- or monthly-payment laws in force in so many States are equally repugnant to the constitutional guarantee of the freedom of contract. This is undoubtedly a logical inference. But what follows? That the Illinois decision is bad? That is what the "Republican," as a supporter of past labor legislation, is bound to conclude. But the true and logical deduction is that the other labor laws are also void and illegal, and that the Illinois decision simply reaffirms the original true principle, which had long been lost sight of and swamped by quibbles, strained interpretation, and juggling.

But are we to wipe out all that years of struggle with greed and oppression have enabled us to realize in labor's behalf? Must we revert to a condition of absolute sway of capital? These are the questions which such well-meaning friends of labor as the "Republican" will naturally ask. Alive to the injustice of the present system, they regard the restrictions imposed on capitalists as victories for the cause of humanity and equity, and it really pains them to contemplate a condition under which employers could compel their workmen to toil longer hours than now and submit to harsher terms in other ways. Even Mr. Foster, the editor of the Boston "Labor Leader," who has often displayed a firm grasp of fundamental principles, is led by this fear of possible further turning of the screws by capital to denounce the Illinois decision as an "aggression" on labor's rights. So it is an aggression to vindicate the right of labor to free contract and to annul statutes treating working-women as minors incapable of entering into agreements! Can the assertion of freedom within the bounds set by equality of freedom ever be an aggression?

An attempt to meet this argument may be found in an editorial in the New York "Voice." Doubtless the "Republican" and Mr. Foster would endorse its reasoning. Says the "Voice":

> We confess that we do not quite see how the reasoning of the court is to be refuted on the assumption that contracts between employers and workmen are entirely voluntary on both sides. We suppose the court could hardly be expected to adopt any other assumption; and yet, as a matter of fact, the assumption is no longer true. Too often the workman, and especially the workwoman, accepts the terms of such contracts only because compelled to do so or to starve. They have little or no choice in the matter; and, if the law does not forbid overharsh terms, they must submit to them. It is not an exercise of liberty, but compulsion under the guise of liberty. "Labor is property," says the court, "and the laborer has the same right to sell his labor and to contract with reference thereto as has any other property-owner." This sounds well; but there is grim sarcasm in it, in view of the fact that it was the corporations that were attacking the law and labor that was defending it. If there were open to labor any choice of opportunities, as frequently there is not, the reasoning of the court would be flawless. But, if the sale of labor is a forced sale on the employer's own terms, we fail to see that a law rendering those terms less harsh is any infringement on the right of labor. The trouble is not with the court's reasoning, but with its assumption.

The fact that capital, and not labor, contested the validity of the legislation in question is totally immaterial. The question was one of constitutional interpretation, and the court could not refuse to pass upon it merely because those theoretically most interested did not appeal to it. Besides, the employers *are* parties to contracts with workmen, and it is of as much importance to them to have the liberty of offering longer hours as it is for the workmen to have the liberty of accepting such offers. To prohibit the employers from entering into contracts providing for a longer number of hours than fixed by statute is clearly an infringement on *their* right, and their is no grim sarcasm in their effort to protect themselves. But how about labor? The "Voice" fails to see that under prevailing conditions, which render the sale of labor a forced sale in most cases, it is an infringement on labor's rights to compel the employer to offer less harsh terms than he would do if the law did not intervene. This failure is due to a confusion of ideas and loose use of terms. To say that a law cannot be an infringement because it operates advantageously to labor under given conditions is to beg the whole question. *How* the law aids the laborer is the point to consider. It aids him by depriving him of a contract right, and in no other way. Now, a denial of such a right *is* an infringement. No further argument is necessary to demonstrate the invasive character of the law: it takes away a positive, fundamental right, — the right to make a certain contract, perfectly legitimate in itself. True, labor does not value or appreciate this right, and prefers the aid of the invasive statute, but that does not alter the character of the statute. Men will surrender most valuable rights and freedoms under the influence of passion, prejudice, blind impulse, grinding poverty, and similar factors, but that does not make their loss any less real and unfortunate. Those of their friends who retain the use of their faculties and appreciate the true character of the acts ought to protest, and prevent, if possible, the consummation of the dangerous bargain.

What is the position of labor today? Owing to many important antecedent aggressions upon and infringements of its rights, it finds itself compelled to accept very unfair, one-sided contracts. Being unjustly deprived of many natural opportunities, it is so restricted in its choice of employment that, in order to avoid starvation, it is forced to submit to harsh requirements. It is really, as the "Voice" puts it, compulsion under the guise of liberty. But what is the remedy for this? Certainly not further aggression, additional denials of fundamental rights, even though these additional infringements assume the shape of restrictions upon the employer, but the removal, abolition, eradication, of those prior, primary evils which have rendered labor so helpless and pitiable. The rights which labor does not value it ought to value, and the rights which it has already lost ought not to be given up and waived in consideration of further sacrifices and losses. We want to preserve the rights it has and recover those of which it has been deprived. Instead of surrendering more ground, we want to retake that improperly seized. Instead of assuring labor that it has no use for freedom of contract, we must show it that it needs much

more, is entitled to much more, and should demand much more.

Those who hold that labor is the victim of injustice want, not legislation rendering employers' terms a little less harsh, but the removal of the injustice and the establishment of right and normal conditions. Those, on the other hand, who do not admit that labor has in any way been wronged and invaded, can only commend so-called labor legislation on the ground that labor is too ignorant and impotent to defend itself against would-be oppressors. Such a view is degrading to labor, and the sentimentalists who entertain it are the worst foes labor can have. Labor needs nothing but equality of opportunities and of freedom. It does not realize this fact yet, and it never will if the few of its friends who do realize it will not neglect everything else and devote themselves to educational work. V. Y.

## The Vanishing Point Reached.

Mr. J. K. Ingalls seems to imagine that the answers which he now gives to my last series of questions are as equivocal as his answer to my previous question. Not so. The terms in which he answered my previous question implied two opposite motives influencing at the same time a business man fulfilling a double capacity, — as borrower and lender, — and cancelling each other. As my question did not concern men who, as individuals, were in the market as lenders, but only those who were in the market as borrowers, this answer was equivocal. But the answers now given to my last questions distinctly recognize the borrowing business man and the lending business man as two individuals, and this recognition removes all the equivocation; for the desire of a lender to lend at a high rate cannot cancel the desire of a borrower to borrow at a low rate, provided the borrower, by association with other borrowers, can provide himself with a source from which to borrow at a low rate, — a condition not as paradoxical as it seems, since the fact of association creates a credit that before had no existence.

The present answers, then, being straightforward and satisfactory, let us review the admissions which I have secured. Mr. Ingalls has admitted that business men desiring to borrow have an adequate motive for embarking in mutual banking (see his article in the present issue); he has admitted that the loans of a mutual bank's credit would cost the bank nothing but running expenses and incidental outlays and losses (see No. 305); he has admitted that this cost would probably be covered by a discount of one-half of one per cent. (see No. 305); and he has admitted that, "in the absence of State or collective meddling, competition would tend unquestionably to reduce discount to its lowest term, which would ordinarily be something above cost" (see No. 305). I have interpreted this last admission as meaning that in banking the force of competition would have a tendency of the same strength as that which it has in other businesses similarly free from physical limitations, — in other words, that the tendency would be strong enough to cause the price to hover around the cost limit, now rising a little above it, now falling a little below it, but averaging cost, or perhaps a shade more. In neither of the two articles which Mr. Ingalls has written since this interpretation appeared has he taken any exception to it. I am justified therefore in assuming that he admits this also.

Now, this series of admissions constitutes the entire case for mutual banking. Whether or not it was ever demonstrated before that mutual banking would abolish the payment of interest for the use of borrowed money, I have now led Mr. Ingalls to demonstrate this himself. His declarations show that under freedom the rate of discount would fall to nearly one-half of one per cent. This is equivalent to the abolition of the payment of interest, for in such a money market an individual case of interest payment would cut no figure economically, any more than one's occasional payment of a quarter to an urchin for delivering a letter cuts a figure now that letter-postage has fallen to two cents. Mr. Ingalls has formally allowed that mutual banking will do all that it claims for itself, and he is forever debarred from repeating that denial or doubt of its claims which has been heard from him at intervals for many years. I began this little campaign of question and answer for the purpose of silencing this gun, and I have effectually done it.

At present Mr. Ingalls finds but one course open to him, — *viz.*, to deny that he ever denied. The plea comes at a suspiciously late hour. Strange that he did not advance it in response to my first questions four months ago, and thus save much time, trouble, and ink. But never mind; late or not, is it true? To settle this question, I go back to No. 302, containing the article by Mr. Ingalls which gave rise to our controversy. And I quote from it this passage (italics mine):

> The economist sees the economic increase from successful labor, and thinks it just; and, whether just or not, it is unescapable, — not because, as he imagines, property is productive (unless, indeed, it is made to embrace the land or the laborer), but because of the uncertainty of all human endeavor, and because men are willing to *pay a premium for the opportunities and instruments* which best assure success, or the immediate gratification of desire. Now, that official circulating credit could eliminate the uncertainties and variability of productive industry is quite problematical. Could it affect the *rate of interest* in any way, *it could not abolish it* for the reasons given. *That mutual banking, or freedom to engage in the issue of circulating credit, can eradicate usury has never been demonstrated or logically made to appear. The legal or market rate of interest* is at present greatly increased by the charge for the endorsement of one firm by another. *A premium of from one to three per cent.*, and even more, is voluntarily given to a party of well known soundness by a party not as well known, though sound in point of fact. Had each party the freedom to circulate their credit at will, *it could in no wise alter this relation* of the parties in such transactions.

By these words Mr. Ingalls denied — or, if he did not deny, he expressed a doubt equivalent to a denial and equally calling for proof — that mutual banking can eradicate usury, and the phraseology shows that he meant by this to deny that mutual banking can eradicate the payment of a premium for the use of money. And, if I had his entire writings for the last fifteen years before me, I could point out equally conclusive instances. As I have not, I can only say that I remember such.

Thus ends this matter. Now Mr. Ingalls desires me to discuss with him the question of the existence of what he calls economic interest, — that is, the question whether people can do more with capital than without it. He asks me to retract my "denial of the existence of economic interest." I pledge him my word that I will retract it as soon as he shall quote to me the passage in which the denial occurred. *There exists no such passage.* To have denied so trite a truth would have been no less remarkable than Mr. Ingalls's grave persistence in affirming it. I do not approve the new use that Mr. Ingalls makes of the word interest, but I have nothing to say in dispute of the entirely undisputed idea which he expresses by the phrase "economic interest." When he denied my position, I had a right to expect him to answer my questions. When he shall show that I have denied his position, he will have a similar right to expect me to answer his questions. And, if he drives me into a corner, I swear that he shall hear no complaint from me that he is trying to "force answers."

But, while I have as yet no occasion to discuss "economic interest" with Mr. Ingalls, it is fitting that I should answer him on certain incidental points that he has made concerning the manner in which mutual banking may be put into practice, and with these matters I purpose to deal in a later article. T.

## Dodging and Worse.

Mrs. Dietrick, in her article on the seventh page, takes an appeal to the readers of Liberty, — a tribunal from which I never shrink. I have charged her with making and persisting in the false and inexcusable statement that Liberty is opposed to the liberty of woman. But I never claimed that she had used precisely those words; the absence of quotation marks indicated that I pretended to give only the essence of her complaint against Liberty. In now denying that she ever said this, it must be presumed that she intends to convey the idea that she never said anything equivalent to this. And yet she admits that she said in July, 1894, that "Liberty seemed to argue that all women should be deprived of even the degree of freedom men now enjoy." In addition to this I have produced her assertion made in December, 1894, that "Liberty assuredly is prejudiced against women. On every other question Liberty champions the removal of restrictions." She now seeks shelter behind the words "seemed to argue," — as much as to say that her July statement did not amount to a positive charge, but carried the idea that Liberty's real position was not its apparent position. But there is no such uncertainty in the December statement. If the charge was not positive in July, it became so in December. In July she charged that Liberty seemed to favor a freedom for men that it does not favor for women, and in December she charged that Liberty actually does favor such a distinction between the two sexes. But every reader of Liberty, including Mrs. Dietrick, knows that it makes no discrimination whatsoever between the sexes in the matter of freedom. Now, these facts completely justify my statement that "Mrs. Dietrick persists in falsely and inexcusably proclaiming in the 'Twentieth Century' that Liberty is opposed to the liberty of woman."

But I have not persisted in my July statement, Mrs. Dietrick tells us, for to persist is to continue steadily. Does she really think that

I meant to say that she went without sleep in order to steadily continue her false charge against Liberty? When one expresses an opinion, and five months later reiterates it, making in the interval no retraction or qualification thereof, it is perfectly in accordance with good English usage to say that he persists in stating the opinion.

Apparently placing little reliance on this logomachy as a help out of her difficulty, she goes further, and declares that she has never repeated her July statement. At the same time she very carefully ignores my citation of her December statement. She said, in substance, in July, that Liberty seemed to oppose the liberty of woman, and she said, in substance, in December, that Liberty does oppose the liberty of woman. That is to say, she made more positively in December the statement that she made less positively in July. To bear out her present claim that she has never repeated her July statement, she must show that her December statement differs from that of July otherwise than in being an aggravation of it, and that in neither case did her words convey the idea of opposition to liberty of woman. In her next contribution to this controversy these matters must receive attention; otherwise her article cannot be admitted to these columns. I will not be dodged if I can help myself.

But Mrs. Dietrick's next manœuvre is something worse than a dodge. In her letter in Liberty of April 6 she declared: "I do not 'persist' in the statement that I did make. On the contrary, I have entirely ceased it." No reasonable person can deny that it is a justifiable inference from these words that Mrs. Dietrick claimed to have ceased this statement for the reason that she no longer held the same opinion. It is true that in strict logic it is quite possible to cease a statement without ceasing to believe it. But the manner and connection in which she used the words just quoted deprive them of any *raison d'être*, unless it be assumed that she intended them to be accepted by the readers of Liberty and by myself as a confession of error. When, therefore, she now declares that they were not so intended, I am placed under the disagreeable necessity of telling her that I do not believe her. Indeed, in all the numerous and sometimes bitter controversies in which I have been engaged during the last twenty years, I do not remember to have encountered any instance of insincerity so obvious as this. If Mrs. Dietrick had not desired her readers to believe that she had changed her mind, she would have said: "I have not repeated my statement, but I still adhere to it." Of two things one: either she did not still adhere to it, and in that case it is dishonest to say now that she did; or she did still adhere to it, and in that case it was dishonest to try to deceive the reader into thinking that she did not. For she knew perfectly well that, when she declared in substance: "I formerly said so, but I say so no more," the reader would naturally infer that she thought so no more.

The remainder of Mrs. Dietrick's article is an attempt to prove that her original statement was true. At present I must decline to consider her argument. In her previous article she made two pleas for woman suffrage: one, that it would create a healthy division of power, resulting in benefit to liberty; the other, that it would intensify the craze for tyrannical legislation, resulting in a final abandonment of tyranny through experience of its evil effects. I went to no little pains to refute these two pleas. Now she writes another long article, in which she takes not the smallest notice of my reasoning. It is a game that two can play at.

T.

## Anarchism and the Children.

Pat Collins, the witty Democratic politician, once said of the late Prohibitionist leader, Robert C. Pitman, that he would be a first-class man if he would only let rum alone. And I always think to myself, when I read the writings of Mr. J. Greevz Fisher in behalf of liberty, that he would be a first-class philosopher if he would only let money alone. After my numerous battles with him on the money question, it is pleasant to quote here with my warmest approval a letter from his pen that appeared in the April number of "Personal Rights," dealing with the question of parental responsibility for the support of children. Addressing the editor, Mr. Fisher says:

On page 18 of "Personal Rights" for 15th March, it is stated that a Socialistic measure about to be laid before the French chamber "bears a striking resemblance to the proposals of certain *quasi*-Individualists in England." It is not clear what are the proposals or who are the *quasi*-Individualists referred to in this phrase.

The moral and the legal responsibility of fathers, like those of many other classes in the community, are extremely difficult to equate. In fact, it may be said with but little hesitation that it would be highly dangerous to attempt to make legal responsibilities generally and universally embrace all moral responsibilities, because, if it were attempted, the enforcement of every virtue and the suppression of every vice would become objects of legal coercion. The objection taken to the proposed French law in the paragraph which alludes to it seems mainly to be that it reaffirms a long-standing maxim of French law that search for the paternity of a child is forbidden. But it is far from clear that, upon Individualistic principles, the search either for the father or the mother, or the enforcement of their parental affection, should be allowed or undertaken by any outsider or (under the deputed powers of these outsiders) by government. So long as Individualists can justify any mode of molestation of other persons by showing that it is undertaken solely to prevent molestation or invasion of themselves or those they choose to defend, then they occupy an impregnable position. But it can hardly be urged that causing or giving birth to a child is an invasion or molestation of the personality or life of the child. The care shown to offspring arises from a universal necessity that, if a race is to continue, it must successfully propagate. Neglect of offspring is a form of suicide. It is fatal to the race and exhibits a morbid, perverted instinct. Here is a child; there is a woman and there a man, who jointly or separately constitute a second party. Finally, here comes an Individualist in person or by deputy. He says: "Here is a young fellow-citizen. It is my duty to see that no one molests or invades his rights. He is hungry. There is a pair of persons somewhere who have procreated the youngster. I feel nearly sure that woman yonder is one, and I have strong reasons to suspect that man walking by her side is the other of the couple who have given him birth. It is right that I should insist upon their feeding the child, and I feel so very strongly on the subject that I will, if necessary, fine or imprison them if they won't carry out what I regard as their responsibilities."

What is the logical connection between this so-called Individualist's principles and his proposed action in this matter? To whom are the parents responsible? Is it to the child? If yes, how so? The child is a person who may have come as undesired to them as vermin or any other pest which dogs men's steps and thwarts their efforts in the pursuit of happiness or pleasure. By highly endowed intelligent persons the arrival of the child would be hailed with love and joy; but this is no guide to the course to be taken when brutish, abnormal, inhuman people involuntarily spawn a breed tainted with their own degraded and perverted nature.

Neglect is not attack. It is unsafe for an Individualist to avow a duty to punish neglect, unless the fundamental principles of Individualism are closely similar to those of the Social Democrats and Socialists in general.

If a person, male or female, alleging parentage, beats, enslaves, or defrauds a child, the Individualist has a perfect right to interfere. He can voluntarily associate himself with the child in a mutual defence organization, and may undoubtedly assume acquiescence by the child. No title to guardianship by a claimant parent ought to be admitted when the alleged guardianship is inimical to the minor. Beyond this point it is unsafe to take one step. Neglect can be better remedied by upholding liberty for anyone directly to supply the wants of the neglected. It cannot be safely dealt with by attempts of a third party to force someone, supposed to be responsible, to undertake the duty.

No doubt it would be perfectly futile today, and in this country, to advocate the action which complete and true liberty from molestation demands in considering the question of intermeddling between other persons and their apparent children. Nevertheless, it will prove on analysis not merely the consistent, but in every respect the most highly advantageous, course to follow liberty in this matter, as in all other relationships of public and private life.

This letter brought great sorrow to the heart of the editor of "Personal Rights," to whom these days give frequent cause to grieve over the sure displacement of halting Individualism by intrepid Anarchism, and he appended to Mr. Fisher's letter the following comment:

We have printed this letter with some hesitation and much regret. The doctrine of parentage put forward by Mr. Fisher is not the Individualistic, but the Anarchistic one, as he will see by referring to Liberty for 3rd September, 1892, page 2. And the principle from which our correspondent deduces this doctrine is also Anarchistic. The assumption is that we must not interfere to prevent neglect, but only to repress positive invasion. If a parent beats his (or her) child, we may constitute ourselves and the child a "mutual defence organization, and may undoubtedly assume acquiescence by the child." But, if a parent leaves his (or her) child to starve, we may *not* join in the defence of this and other children, and may not entertain the question of the child's acquiescence. If this were Individualism, the distinction between it and Anarchism would be merely verbal.

On no question does the difference between Socialism, Individualism, and Anarchism come out more strongly than on that of parentage. The Individualist and the Socialist agree that the child should have the legal right of maintenance; but the Socialist would throw the corresponding duty on the State, while the Individualist would throw it on those who are responsible for the child's existence. The Socialist and the Anarchist agree in repudiating parental responsibility for the maintenance of the child; but the Anarchist would do this at the expense of the child, while the Socialist would do it at the expense of the community.

Barring the possible implication that Anarchism would countenance compulsion of the neglectful parent in case the neglected child should acquiesce in the volunteered defence, Mr. Levy, who at least knows Anarchism when he sees it, states the case in a way which I, as one Anarchist, am very willing to accept. But it should be added that, as a matter of fact, the expense under Anarchism would fall, not on the child, but on the benevolent agencies which, moved by sympathy and by prudence, would almost certainly undertake to support abandoned children. I have never been able to

[Continued on page 8.]

## The Ballot.

The Knave and the Fool and the Quite Bright Man
  Lived all by themselves on an island fair.
And the very smart Knave formed a marvellous plan
  To own that same island and all the things there.
So he said to the Fool: "I'm a man divine
And a friend of thine; be a friend of mine."

And he then explained to the very dull Fool
  The thesis of government good and strong.
"Dame Nature herself," he remarked, "goes by rule,
  And, in order to peaceably glide along,
We must have *in futuro* a *codex* of laws,
With Justice and Honor in every clause."

So he drafted a code that would go thirteen ways,
  And he read it aloud to the Fool and the Man.
Referred to committee, reported with praise;
  And then on each section the voting began.
A full referendum, a fair, honest count,
With courteous discussion to any amount.

They voted on this, and they voted on that;
  A two-thirds majority 's certain to rule.
The other man's head-piece from under his hat
  They voted, they voted, — that Knave and that Fool.
Thus ever. Whenever a freeman shall choose
To shake the old ballot-box dice, he will lose.

*William Walstein Gordak.*

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## The Woman Who Did.

Grant Allen has given us in his latest work (published by Roberts Brothers; price, $1.00) a book which he says is the first he has written that is satisfying to his own taste and conscience. The book is a caustic arraignment of the institution of marriage. Herminia Barton, the central character, is a girl reared in refinement, who strives to carry into practice her notion that woman is the equal of man, and that the conventions to the contrary are to be nullified.. She does not shrink from the logical extremes to which the espousal of this view carries her. She enters into a free relation with a young barrister, though the love which Alan Merrick bears her urges his insistence upon some ceremonial form to shield her from the consequences he foresees. Herminia persists in her determination to remain free. Alan dies before having legally executed the will he had drawn for the protection of Herminia. Their child, Dolores, is born after the death of the father. Poverty comes upon the scene to turn the current of Herminia's experiment awry, and the child, growing up under conditions so different from the freedom-inspiring youth of her mother, turns out a sad disappointment to Herminia, who dies of a broken heart.

A very sad ending, but eminently satisfactory to the conservative who may chance to read the book, and quite as satisfactory (though from another viewpoint) to one who believes that freedom makes for happiness and not for heartbreaks. The conservative who resents Herminia's experiment and delights in her despair fails to discern here a vindication of one of his Bible texts: "The misery of the poor is their poverty." Reared in refinement, Herminia rose to the plane of freedom. Reared in poverty, Dolores was crushed into the level of mediocrity. Poverty degrades. Had Alan lived, he would have borne his share of the education of his daughter. With the advantages of such an education as affluence could have afforded her, she would, with congenial companionship of freedom-loving parents, have developed an ardent love of liberty. The cowardly world that hounded Herminia would not have dared, had her mate lived and asserted himself.

It was not the exercise of her freedom which overcast Herminia's history with the element of tragedy, but the limitations which beset her freedom.

It is to be regretted that the author falls into so glaring an inconsistency as to suggest the wisdom of a communal protectorate over womankind. There can be no freedom, if there be such dependence. A more serious fault in the book, regarded from an Egoistic point of view, is the author's persistent reference to the "duty" which Herminia believed she owed to her sister women, -- her "self-sacrifice" and her "martyrdom." Constituted as she was, — inspired by such an ambition and impelled by such motives, -- she decided that she could not be happy without at least making her best struggle for a cause she conceived to be worthy of her efforts.

She was seeking her own happiness, and is depicted as having foresight enough to count the probable cost. The "self-sacrifice" spook could not assert itself very forcibly if we were to assume that Herminia could have foreseen the early death of Alan, the circumscriptions of her ability to train her daughter, and the final defection of Dolores from the mother's high hopes. If, foreseeing all these miseries, Herminia had still persisted, she would indeed have been a martyr, but no less a fool. No one above the grade of fool voluntarily does what is sure to make for unhappiness. A sacrifice that is designed to give us greater comfort and happiness than some other course open to concurrent choice is not sacrifice at all in any rightful use of the term.

The book has great merit as a stimulus to thought on a question that cries for solution, and such a book as "The Woman Who Did" is not written in vain. It is an integral part of the Insurgent Literature of our times, and in the ranks of the rebel troop it is not important that each volunteer be full six feet tall.

HERMAN KUEHN.

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## Point of the Interest Question.

*To the Editor of Liberty:*

Before replying to your questions as amended, but still so ambiguous as to invite equivocal answers, I will briefly attempt to ascertain where we are (at) in this discussion. At the conclusion of my brief essay on "Unescapable Interest" I had invited discussion of the truth of what was new in it. I confess to surprise that, "instead of a book" or even a paragraph of argument, I was met by a string of questions, with claim of a right to force answers, and refusal to discuss the question until there were no question to discuss and until I should retract or refuse to retract a denial I had never made, — *viz.*, that "mutual banking will make it *possible* to borrow money without interest"; or that a free market will have a tendency to reduce the rate of interest to an equilibrium, zero. It does not seem to have occurred to the editor that a "free market" embraced anything more than liberty to divide, coin, and circulate credits and commodities, or that freedom to produce, possess, and exchange wealth were necessary before free banking could have more than a theoretical existence.

To your early question I answered that it was based on three conditions, neither of which was even supposable without a desire to derive some advantage, profit, or interest therefrom. In the editor's eagerness to make me "'fess," he did not become aware that, in establishing the existence of a motive for mutual banking, he at the same time established the existence of economic rent or interest for the use of capital, since the reduction of the percentage would be so much gained to capital or to the increased profit of labor in the use of capital. His contention that the use of capital increases production is an admission of the same kind.

In order to avoid misuse of terms, I think we should use the word usury for monopoly interest, which is its exact meaning, while interest proper should be called interest still, as that is its original meaning, — "premium for the use of capital" being only one, and the *fifth* in order, of Webster's definitions. It might also be used to indicate that portion of interest after it has been captured from the rightful holder; but usury is a better term for that. Rent, which is synonymous with interest or usury, is also used to denote the normal advantage of superior soil or location, whether held by the occupier or captured by a landlord; and rent from use of more or better capital, whether enjoyed by user, or plundered by lord of money or capital, is still called rent, as in France, or annuity, as in England.

The discussion seems to have arrived at a point capable of reduction to a syllogism something like this: Interest, or increase of labor's production from use of capital, or saving of the same, is the efficient motive for forming mutual banks; but mutual banks will kill interest; therefore, mutual banks will kill the motive for their formation.

A deduction less absurd would be: the interest constituting the motive to form mutual banks is a wholly different thing, or a different relation of the same thing, from the thing the banks were formed to kill. But this deduction would give the case to economic rent, interest, etc.

I can now proceed to answer the questions last propounded, in which the ambiguity still lingers. "Business men" are not all borrowers, unless they are all lenders as well. The first question relates to borrowers only. I should say that a *borrowing* business man would lose no opportunity he ever had to lend at any rate of interest, because to be able to lend would make him a *lending* business man, to whom the question does not refer; but to be able to borrow at one per cent. might *increase* his opportunity greatly. For example, the national banks, who borrow at one per cent., or less, of government.

The second question is made unnecessary by the answer to the first. The third requires also an alternative. The *borrowing* business man would have a reasonable consideration for forming a mutual bank; a lending business man would not. National bankers, with little cash and considerable capital (bonds), are induced to form national banks; but there are many private banks and State banks, who have more cash than capital, who do not avail themselves of the opportunity, and many national banks have thrown up their charters and gone again to private or State banking, some of whom are now paying their depositors three per cent. on their deposits, and even six per cent.

I shall be ready to recant my heresy whenever it is shown that the "saving grace" of mutual banking for discount purposes, and the capitalization of debts, is a cardinal doctrine of the Anarchistic church; but I think the editor will first retract his endorsement of economic rent, or else his denial of the existence of economic interest, unless he is able to compromise on the "sporadic" in both. I am certain he will be unable to show wherein rent and interest differ; which I would be glad to have him attempt. It would also greatly gratify me to have him explain the nature of the "appropriate legislation" by which he will prohibit the ignorant and shiftless worker from exchanging a part of his natural wages (the increase) with a boss, dealer, pawn-broker, or lender who will relieve him from a little care, exertion, or responsibility, or discount the fruits of his toil before ripening, and on such terms as the two may agree upon. I think the editor mistakes greatly the character of the labor dollar of Andrews, the labor note of Warren, and particularly the labor check of the Labor Exchange. The purpose is not, as I understand, to create a bank of discount, or a loan association, but to employ an instrument or tool, to effect a ready completion of commodity exchanges, in order to counteract the evil to commerce of our present financial credits, which operate to aid the forestaller to hold commodities out of market for a rise, resulting in periodical gluts, financial panics, and industrial crises.

Lending has not the remotest relation to exchange. I can understand that completion of one side to an exchange can be deferred and usury charged up as a penalty therefor. But how a loan can become an exchange without compounding the penalty — in itself a misdemeanor — I do not see, or how it can even then become a factor in exchange. Credit other than the strictly commercial adds in no way to the circulation of commodities, to the amount of land, or to the capacity to labor. Credit and money are economic factors only as they become instruments in facilitating the completion of exchanges.

It becomes necessary, first, to show an economic necessity for borrowing, which at the same time will prove the impossibility of killing interest, either economic or monopolistic. Indebtedness and usury are inseparable, except through repudiation or a bankrupt law. Now, if a necessity exists for borrowing, or if there be even an unreasoning demand for loans, the same remuneration, including increase, will be commanded by the lender as that which is received in other lines of business. If no such necessity exists, there can be no necessity for banks of discount. If lending be a benefit to the borrower, or compatible with the public weal, which I in general terms deny, it cannot be had without paying its market price. If it is not a benefit, but, as a rule, an injury, there is no call for interference to enforce its agreements.

I trust the editor has exaggerated his position by intimating that he has no use for liberty, unless it will enable mutual banks to abolish interest. It is no exaggeration to say that the correspondent has no

occasion for an anarchy which is to become the instrument of invasive barbarisms, bonds, mortgages, foreclosures, evictions, forfeitures of land, home, opportunity to labor, and even of personal freedom, not merely in such States as Turkey and Mexico, but everywhere. The "sacred contract" has no attraction for me. "The light it sheds saves not, but damns, the world."

If my answers suit the editor, and he feels sustained in his positions, and that he has demonstrated theoretically what I declared had never been demonstrated positively, my general positions still remain unquestioned and unquestionable, — *viz*,

First, that from labor, through use of land and capital, all increment, economic interest, is derived.

Second, that all hiring of land, of capital (or of money, if you will), under monopoly, is tribute extracted from the interest earned by labor.

Third, that such tribute under such dependence is inevitable while the monopolies are legally sustained.

And I will add a fourth by way of suggestion: The abolition of land rent would greatly reduce the tribute now exacted by all other monopolies. Abolition of other rents could not in any way reduce tribute from the use of land or ownership of labor, but would rather tend to increase them.

GLENORA, N. Y. J. K. INGALLS.

## Liberty's Views on Woman's Liberty.

In its issue of March 9, 1895, Liberty asserts that "Mrs. Dietrick persists in falsely and inexcusably proclaiming in the 'Twentieth Century' that Liberty is opposed to the liberty of woman."

To this charge I plead "Not guilty!"

I have never yet made the proclamation, anywhere, that "Liberty is opposed to the liberty of woman."

I appeal to the jury of impartial readers of this journal to hear my side of the case, and judge whether the epithets "falsely and inexcusably" belong justly to me or to my accuser.

The inexactness of Liberty's charges, even with printed matter before it, is strikingly illustrated in the issue of April 6, 1895. In that number I deny Liberty's charge (quoted above) and say: "On the contrary, I have entirely ceased the statement *I did* make, which was that Liberty *seemed to argue* as follows: 'Every individual should be as free from coercion and interference as possible; therefore, all women should be deprived of even the degree of freedom men now enjoy.'" Now, "to persist" is "to continue steadily." I maintain, firstly, that I never did say what Liberty charges me with saying; and, secondly, that, of even the statement which I did really make, it is incorrect, untrue, to say that I persist in making it, when I made it in July, 1894, and have never repeated it, though eight months have passed by since.

Liberty, in this April 6 number, assumes that I retract my July statement, and calls upon me for an apology! Liberty misunderstands my words completely. I simply pointed out Liberty's error in declaring that I had "persisted" in saying what I said in July. While it is untrue that I have, hitherto, "persisted," I see that the time has come for me to reaffirm that Liberty does seem to argue that, though every individual should be as free from coercion and interference as possible, women should not have a chance to, in any manner, free themselves from the coercion and interference of men.

Men, all over this country, are meeting in legislatures and making laws which interfere with every act of woman's life in relation to others, from birth to death, and yet Liberty argues against allowing any woman a legal right to sit in these law-making bodies and say a word in her own defence! In twenty-three States men have appointed commissions of men only to reshape divorce laws. As women are not recognized as worth listening to among law-makers, not a solitary woman has been placed on these commissions. And yet the interests of men and women concerning divorce, though equivalent, are by no means the same. All the indications are that these twenty-three male commissions will make divorce more difficult, will place increased restrictions about it, even if they do not make divorce impossible save for one cause. But facts prove that 65.8 per cent. of all the divorces in the United States during twenty years were asked for by women who found their husbands unendurable. Thus women's interests lie in the direction of easier, freer divorce, and it is profoundly important that their right to check hasty masculine legislation should be recognized as speedily as possible.

I regard the present separation of man and woman into law-making sovereign and law-obeying subject as the cause of many of the worst evils that Liberty seeks to cure. Shutting woman off from all participation in the common affairs of humanity collected in a city or town renders it impossible for them to get the education which men acquire simply through their greater freedom. As they are thus partly wheedled and partly forced into the attitude of ciphers, their powers degenerate. As their powers degenerate, men begin to have contempt for them, to denounce the very qualities which they have helped to foster!

Where one sex is legally sovereign and the other legally subject, the most feeble members of the enslaved sex inevitably develop the special faults of slaves, — namely, weakness, timidity, recklessness, ignorance, lying, deceit, etc. They become unbalanced simply because they are not allowed to balance themselves. Society is very much influenced by words, by symbols. The artificial power conferred upon men by the ballot, and the artificial humility imposed upon women by disfranchisement, inevitably renders the mass of men more arrogantly conceited in favor of their own sex, and the mass of women more slavishly subservient toward those whose superiority is thus assumed, and, thus, more and more incapable of self-development. In a word, the effect is to encourage one sex unduly, and to discourage the other.

Men, in general, when they have fault to find with men, use some discrimination. They boast of the masculine mind, masculine logic, and so on. They impudently assume — indeed, openly say — that a woman who reasons shows *masculine* ability. But if a fool or two, or a clique of tyrants or two, appear among women, at once men assume that folly and tyranny are special attributes of the woman sex!

Liberty, in its issue of June 30, opposed allowing women the liberty which men now possess (that is, the liberty to protect themselves from law and penalties made *solely* by men) on the expressed grounds that the arguments made by women in behalf of their deliverance from man's rule prove that "persons who can talk such rubbish will bring no valuable elements into politics!" Liberty's argument in that number was that, while the women who are contented with their present subjection to men's laws and penalties talk "rubbish," those who are anxious to escape from such slavery talk "even more offensive rubbish," — that even the most progressive and modern champions of woman's deliverance from man's rule "astonish one by the audacity and ignorance of their assertions." Liberty even declares that no person dwelling in society needs to have a vote for self-protection!! A vote is simply a voice, simply an acknowledgment that each member of a community has a right to speak in behalf of his or her own interests. If men, in their self-constituted tyranny, have perverted, or abused, the natural right of the citizen to thus speak, that is not women's fault, nor does it justify perpetuating the slavery of women to men.

I maintain that tyranny, of any sort, begets tyranny of many sorts; that the Comstock laws, the prohibitions, the meddlings, the canting, the hypocrisy, the reform by force, the bigotry and intolerance, are all inevitable outgrowths of allowing men to arbitrarily legislate for woman. When the axe is laid at that root, the first genuine blow will be struck for true liberty.

December 1, 1894, Liberty declared that "my demand for liberty shall be made in the quarter where it seems (to me) most imperatively needed, *but no demand for liberty made elsewhere shall receive other than my encouragement. Nay, every such demand shall be hailed by me as an evidence of progress.*"

Now, I have italicized that declaration, and I call upon the jury to consider it thoughtfully. There can be no question, in any dispassionate mind, that the revolt of a subjected sex — its demand for the measure of liberty which men now enjoy, that is, liberty to even nominally speak in their own sex-interests — ought to be hailed by every lover of freedom as an evidence of progress. Every leader in this demand (no matter what arguments she may, momentarily, employ) bases her demand for equal rights with man on her natural right to enjoy "equal freedom to control self and the results of self-exertion." Every such leader recognizes that *exceptional cases* may justify disregard of equal freedom, but that nothing, — neither women's content with slavery or the Anarchists' desire for some ideal — can justify one moment's continuance of this present false and evil estate.

As some one has recently said: As soon as two human beings appeared in each other's neighborhood, natural right required that they should agree to respect each other's "equal freedom to control self and the results of self-exertion." The instant human beings began to depart from that natural right, that instant society fell into unnatural wrong. The *natural* thing is for members of the same species to work together for the preservation of that species. This truth we find exemplified even in purely animal nature. As slavery injures both master and slave, it is, manifestly, unnatural.

In conclusion, I affirm that, though Liberty has now proved itself opposed to the liberty of woman, it was not I who ever, hitherto, either made such a charge or "persisted" in it.

What I did say, firstly, was that Liberty seemed to argue with ridiculous inconclusiveness on the general subject of liberty for the two sexes, and, secondly, that prejudice was manifested when a journal, in one breath, champions the retention of certain restrictions, and, in the next, declares that it favors the removal of all restrictions upon liberty! That Liberty is swayed by prejudice against women, as a sex, seems to me clearly established by the editorials both of June 30, 1894, and of August 25. In the latter Spencer was editorially quoted to show that "on biological and psychological grounds women naturally are and always must be extremely conservative." Instances were not given of individual cases of feminine narrowness, illiberality, shortsightedness, and conservatism; but the sweeping assertion was made that such are the attributes of woman as a sex! And it was asserted that "all *à priori* considerations lead to the conclusion that woman's faith in the efficacy of coercive legislation and regulation is far more blind and absolute than that of men."

This I deny. I assert that such traits are common to ignorant people; that they are not at all attributes of sex; and that Liberty's assertions are "falsely and inexcusably" maligning the nature of woman. I appeal from Liberty to the readers of Liberty to judge between us. ELLEN BATTELLE DIETRICK.

## Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps.

The Secretary wants every reader of Liberty to send in his name for enrolment. Those who do so thereby pledge themselves to write, when possible, a letter every fortnight, on Anarchism or kindred subjects, to the "target" assigned in Liberty for that fortnight, and to notify the secretary promptly in case of any failure to write to a target (which it is hoped will not often occur), or in case of temporary or permanent withdrawal from the work of the Corps. All, whether members or not, are asked to lose no opportunity of informing the secretary of suitable targets. Address, STEPHEN T. BYINGTON, Bordentown, N. J.

Comrade Cohen wishes me to remind the members again that he can use any number of letters, and is crippled unless he gets more than are now being written. He asks that members will send him more than one letter apiece in a fortnight, and that friends outside the Corps will also help. I have said all this before, but I am glad to say it again, if it will produce one extra letter. I ask every reader to take the following questions as personal to himself or herself: First, do you believe in any part of Liberty's doctrines as an important contribution to the solution of the "labor problem"? Second, is there any hustle in you, or isn't there? If you do, and if there is, prove it by taking advantage of one of the finest opportunities that will offer in several years.

Cohen writes: "Every letter sent to me will be printed in *some* paper, and I can use any number. The trades union papers are still talking about the defeat of Plank 10, and politics does not have the favor with them that one would expect. There is no time like the present to work with them."

Target, sections A and B. — Henry Cohen, 1339 Welton St., Denver, Col. Write letters for publication in labor papers, as directed in last three issues.

Section C. — Miss Adeline Knapp, care of "Morning Call," San Francisco, Cal., a Statist of some local prominence and an occasional lecturer before the Socialist

Labor Party. She had in the "Call" for Sunday, March 17, an article entitled "Anarchists, Communists, Socialists," in which she describes the spider as a typical Anarchist in the insect world, the ants as typical Communists, and the bees as typical Socialists. She says:

> For my Anarchist is none other than a huge, sprawling, pot-bellied, black spider — as unpleasant to contemplate as any Herr Most among them. . . .
> The spider is the very spirit and essence of Anarchism. In his manner of life and his habits he is the concentration of that individualism which Anarchy seeks to establish. . . .
> They have never learned the first principles of coöperation . . . .
> Each spider lives solitary and alone, and by virtue of its habits it has become eminently specialized for a solitary existence.
> It has purchased its specialization, however, at an enormous cost. It has perfect individual freedom to perish, unless it can secure itself against the depredations of its foes and the attacks of its own kind and at the same time obtain a food supply. . . .
> But she is a thorough individual. She is a law unto herself, and doubtless, could she think at all, she would reflect with scorn upon those misguided creatures that work for each other and draw their food supply from a common stock and have no personal webs or homes aside from the common one."

Show her that Anarchism is in no way opposed to coöperation. Don't tell her how few Anarchists there are who are willing to join a coöperative organization like the A. L. W. C. for the spread of their doctrine. She would think it proved all her points if she knew that. STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.

## Anarchism and the Children.

[Continued from page 5.]

understand why it should be considered more dreadful to support a helpless child than to support a helpless adult. And equally beyond my comprehension is the theory which, after compelling parents to support their children because of the responsibility of the former for the existence of the latter, ceases to compel them to do so after the children have passed a certain age. Why should a man be restrained from leaving his infant son to the mercy of the community, but allowed to abandon to the care of others this same son when grown-up, even though he be a helpless cripple or perhaps unwilling to support himself? By what right does the law declare that, when helpless individuals have reached a certain age, the authors of their being may transfer the burden to my shoulders? The simple truth of the matter is that no person, parent or not, may be rightfully compelled to support any helpless being, of whatever age or circumstance, unless he has made that being helpless by some invasive act. T.


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